

oracular relic in the neighbouring temple. If that were so, we should be almost driven to conclude that the bejewelled woman's arm found in the tomb of Osiris is the arm of Isis.

In support of the conclusion that the myth and religion of Osiris grew up round the revered memory of a dead man we may quote the words in which the historian of European Osiris and morals describes the necessity under which the popular imagination labours of embodying its cherished ideals in living persons. He is referring to the dawn of the age of chivalry, when in the morning twilight the heroic figure of Charlemagne rose like a bright star above the political horizon, to be thenceforth encircled by a halo of romance like the nimbus that shone round the head of Osiris.

In order that the tendencies I have described should acquire their full force, it was necessary that they should be represented or illustrated in some great personage, who, by the splendour and the beauty of his career, could fascinate the imaginations of men. It is much easier to govern great masses of men through their imagination than through their reason. Moral principles rarely act powerfully upon the world, except by way of example or ideals. When the course of events has been to glorify the ascetic or monarchical or military spirit, a great saint, or sovereign, or soldier will arise, who will concentrate in one dazzling focus the blind tendencies of his time, kindle the enthusiasm and fascinate the imagination of the people. But for the prevailing tendency, the great man would not have arisen, or would not have exercised his great influence. But for the

great man, whose career appealed vividly to the imagination, the prevailing tendency would never have acquired its full intensity."<sup>1</sup>

Whether the parallel thus suggested between Charle- The magne, the mediaeval ideal of a Christian knight, and Osiris, ^ ^ on the ancient Egyptian ideal of a just and beneficent monarch, historical holds good or not, it is now impossible to determine. For Osiris' ° while Charlemagne stands near enough to allow us clearly left open. to discern his historical reality, Osiris is so remote that we can no longer discriminate with any certitude between the

<sup>1</sup> W. E. H. Leclcy, *History of Charlemagne*, Third Edition (London, *European Morals from Augustus to* 1877), ii. 271.